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Editorial: Remember our deputy

This week Rep. Todd Rokita offered his public condolences to the family and friends of fallen Howard County Sheriff's Deputy Carl Koontz on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. He did so in front of a large printout of Deputy Koontz's photo, which was propped up on an easel.

Rokita connected the proximity on the calendar of the March 20 shooting, which also left Sgt. Jordan Buckley wounded, to the holiday we stop to celebrate today: Easter. Rokita correctly pointed out Koontz's wife, Kassie, and his infant son, Noah, would be spending what would normally be a joyous holiday without this husband and father.

The potentially lethal nature of these sorts of professions is a fact of life for first responders. We as civilians can easily forget this fact because, frankly, we don't have to remember.

But, every police officer, firefighter and EMS worker puts on their uniforms each day knowing it could be their last.

Statistically, there are certainly more dangerous jobs one could have, but when problems arise and there's no one else to call, these men and women

run toward danger, not from it. We depend on them to be our first line of defense against hazards to our well-being.

So, today, as you enjoy your ham or hunt for Easter eggs, remember those closest to Deputy Koontz, and the family and friends of others who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Holidays, birthdays and other special occasions will never be the same for them. We can never fix the deep pain they are no doubt feeling right now. But, we can offer our support.

In Monday's paper, we're publishing an entire page of your tributes to Deputy Koontz. And, on Tuesday, his funeral procession will snake through town. Please take these opportunities to let those who risk their lives day in and day out know how much their sacrifices mean to us.